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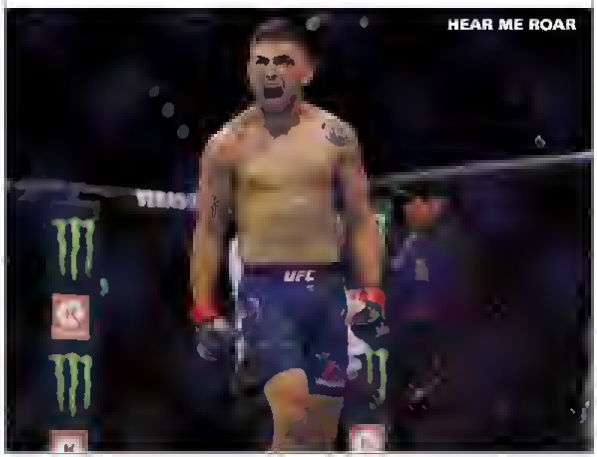

ERAN RYAN

up front

The County

06 | NEWS | Will Tiger Woods' old Anaheim golf course become a brand-new community park? By Gabriel San Román
08 | OANA WATCH | Morning talk shows try to make sense of our surfin' congressman By Matt Coker
08 | HEY, YOU! | Baby-stroller bumper car By Anonymous

Feature

09 | NEWS | Did OC prosecutors finger the wrong man for the Golden State Killer's murderous rampage? By R. Scott Moxley

in back

Calendar

15 | EVENTS | Things to do while trying not to burn.

Food

18 | REVIEW | Oak Kitchen in Buena Park has your veggie dim sum down. By Edwin Goei
18 | WHAT THE ALE | How to pick a beerfest. By Greg Nagal
20 | LONG BEACH LUNCH | Flamin Curry brings Indian fast food to Belmont Heights By Sarah Bannett
21 | EAT & DRINK THIS NOW | Water Grille raw bar, plus a Piccadilly Circus cocktail By Greg Nagal

Film

22 | REVIEW | After all these years, Nico is still cooler than you. By Aimee Murillo
23 | SPECIAL SCREENINGS | Compiled by Matt Coker

Culture

24 | THEATER | Long Beach Playhouse's *The Twentieth-Century Way* plumbs the city's history By Joel Baers
24 | ARTS OVERLOAD | Compiled by Aimee Murillo

Music

26 | PROFILE | How the Harp Inn became OC's cover- and tribute-band mecca By Christine Terrissa
26 | PROFILE | Real Big Fish Dan Regan makes waves in the craft-beer world By CJ Simonson
29 | CONCERT GUIDE | Compiled by Nate Jackson

also

30 | SAVAGE LOVE | By Dan Savage
32 | TOKE OF THE WEEK | Spng CBD Soda By Mary Carreon
38 | PAINT IT BLACK | Casa Romantica's "The Art of Baja California" captures the magic of the real Big Sur By Lisa Black

on the cover

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Design by Richie Beckman

ORANGE FEATHERS »

ALGAE

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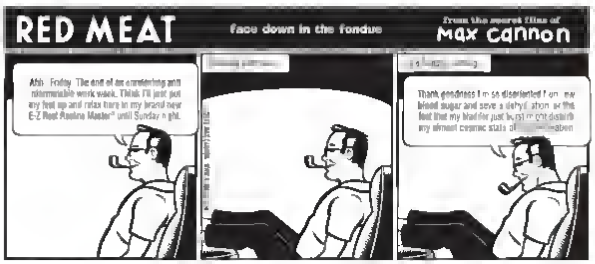

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Daddyshack

Will Tiger Woods' old golf course in Anaheim be replaced with a brand-new community park?

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

Carts whirl around the grounds of Dad Miller Golf Course in Anaheim on a recent Saturday afternoon. Bent at the knees, a golfer swings his putter and sends a shot toward the hole. The ball tumbles to the left before coming to a stop. He walks over and tries again, this time, the ball curves before finally sinking into the hole.

But there may be no future swings for golfers at Dad Miller. A decades-long presence in the city, the 18-hole public golf course, like many others, is failing to attract a new generation of players to the sport, prompting Anaheim to look at possibly converting it into a 100-acre park with sports fields.

Dad Miller has a storied history with Anaheim dating back to 1961, when its first nine holes opened; the back nine followed two years later. Harold George "Dad" Miller, an avid golfer in the community, helped to make the course a reality. In 1970, the then 93-year-old even sank a hole in one on his namesake course.

In the early '90s, a teen named Eldrick "Tiger" Woods also roamed these grounds while on Western High School's golf team. A few years later, Woods turned professional, became the Professional Golfers' Association's player of the year a record 11 times and won 18 World Golf Championships. In 2006, he returned to Dad Miller to open up the Tiger Woods Learning Center, a $25 million project adjacent to the course. The opening ceremony brought such distinguished guests as former president Bill Clinton and California's then first lady, Maria Shriver.

But times are changing in Anaheim, and not even the lore of Woods and Miller before him may be enough to keep the space intact. "As we've seen across the sport, golf courses have been struggling in recent years to get the attention of younger generations," says Lauren Gold, spokeswoman for the city. "Dad Miller just barely breaks even in the budget each year and is in need of some major infrastructure improvements to keep it going."

The city published in May a comprehensive Anaheim Parks Plan, in which it established a standard of 2 acres per 1,000 residents—a ratio that leaves the west side lacking. The plan looked into ways additional parkland could be found in the future to keep pace with a growing population. Though not mentioned by name in the plan, Dad Miller rests on city-owned land, and staffers are already in the earliest phases of looking at potential reuses of the site.

"One hundred acres is a lot to work with," says James Vanderbilt, Anaheim councilman for District 2, where the course resides. "It's almost a once-in-a-century opportunity for a city like Anaheim at this point in its development."

Duane Roberts, a longtime resident who has pulled papers to run against Vanderbilt this November, agrees with his opponent. "For many years, people in West Anaheim have been complaining about a lack of green space for families and children," he says. "An overwhelming majority of people who live in West Anaheim don't play golf, they play soccer and other sports. Converting this golf course into a public park will bring greater benefits, as this facility only serves a very small minority of residents." He sees potential for splash pads, farmers' markets and community events with the conversion.

The city also sees many positives. New fields and parkland would be a boost for nearby schools, youth sports groups and community residents looking to enjoy recreational activities. "It would also free up resources in our city budget by taking out the higher cost of running a golf course," Gold adds. Plus, there is a second municipal golf course in Anaheim Hills.

But there are other things the city must consider before making any moves. Dad Miller enjoys a reputation for affordability. Any potential changes to the land use would also have to take into account the impact on surrounding residential communities, including apartment complexes and a mobile-home park. And then there's the legacy of Woods and Miller themselves. (Contacted by the *Weekly*, the Tiger Woods Foundation offered no comment by press time.)

Not everyone is onboard with rethinking Dad Miller. Esther Wallace, chair of the West Anaheim Neighborhood Development (WAND) council, vehemently opposes a conversion. "Dad Miller Golf Course has been a real asset to West Anaheim," she says. "It is affordable golfing for our residents, especially seniors." She contends the conversion idea is being promoted by advocates who are pushing for a permanent space in a park with on-site resources for the local homeless population. Invoking the fiasco of Irvine's Great Park, Wallace warns Anaheim would have to sell off parkland in the future for dense housing developments because of a lack of funds supporting any such ambitious plan.

LET'S KILL ALL THE GOPHERS?

GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

"What's interesting are the contradictory statements Wallace is making about green space," Roberts counters. "One minute, she rallies against Access California Services' proposal to build a family resource center on an unused scrap of land at Brookhurst Park, saying that it will take away green space. But when somebody makes a serious proposal to create a 100-acre community park in West Anaheim—one that drastically increases the amount of green space available to all residents—she argues we can't have more green space because somebody will fill it up with homeless people!"

Either way, the debate surrounding Tiger Woods' old stomping grounds is teeing off a bit prematurely. The future of Dad Miller is unlikely to come before the City Council just yet; a workshop or a departmental update is far more plausible. "There's always a possibility it could remain a golf course, too," Vanderbilt says, "as an ultimate finding of this exploration about other uses."

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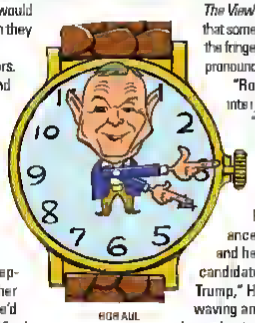
Raising McCain

» MATT COKER

ABC's *The View* made a "hot topic" July 16 out of Sacha Baron Cohen's series *Who Is America?* (This space also did so July 16 online and July 20 in print.)

On that show, which had premiered the night before on Showtime, the comedian posed as an Israeli anti-terrorism expert pitching his "Kinder Guardians" initiative, which would arm children beginning when they are toddlers to defend themselves against school shooters. American gun proponents and current and former politicians, who were duped into believing they were being interviewed for Israeli television, went along with Cohen's "Colonel Erran Morad."



BOB AUL

However, Cohen was not the one who wound up in the hot topic hot seat—Representative Dana Rohrabacher (R-Putin's Hot Mess) was. He'd just been shown in a brief *Who Is America?* clip saying, "Maybe having young people trained and understanding how to defend themselves and their school might actually make us safer here."

That prompted *The View*'s Meghan McCain to say, "It's ... important that Dana Rohrabacher is one of the worst congressmen in office. There are jokes about how close he is to Putin, that Putin actually pays him, so ... this isn't the beacon of the Republican Party, obviously. It's people with really crappy communications staffs, clearly."

The daughter of Vietnam War hero and former presidential candidate Senator John McCain (R-Arizona) then spoke of the set-up man: "I think Sacha Baron Cohen is a genius; I think he is the Peter Sellers of our time," she said as the audience began clapping. "I love him. I can't say that I don't consume his entertainment. It would be interesting if he could actually get a provocative, pro-gun Republican to actually have a discussion about this. Obviously, arming toddlers is insane."

The View's Sunny Hostin conceded that some of Cohen's targets are "on the fringe, but this guy Rohrback—am I pronouncing his name correctly?"

"Rohrabacher," McCain interjected.

"He's a 15-term congressman, he's a senior member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, he serves on the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology; and he was floated as a possible candidate for Secretary of State for Trump," Hostin continued. With arms waving and her voice rising, she then admitted, "This scares the heck out of me. What does that say?"

McCain was not done. "I reject Congressman Rohrabacher. I mean, I full-heartedly reject him on every level. I don't want to be associated with anything he has to do with."

"He's a Californian, right?" asked Hostin. "Why is he elected to Congress? Why do they keep electing him?"

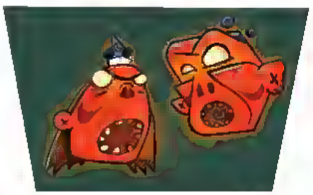
Host Whoopi Goldberg stuck the landing: "Because sometimes, you know, weird people have done wonderful things ... and then they lose their minds."

Got Dana Watch fodder? Email mcoker@ocweekly.com.

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS

Baby-Stroller Bumper Car



BOB AUL

You were the mother pushing her stroller through the mouse-loving multitudes at Disneyland. When the crowd bottlenecked around New Orleans Square, your stroller wheels revved up my ankles on more than one occasion, each time burning my skin more than the last. "Do it again, and I'll lock your baby!" I warned.

"Maybe you should move out of the way," you sneered back.

Ah, the Happiest Place On Earth indeed.

Luckily for you, we parted ways soon after. I went toward the Haunted Mansion, you carried on to Critter Country. The next time you want to play bumper cars, may I suggest going to Bug's Land at California Adventure? There aren't enough people there for you to wield your toddler carriage of carnage like the weapon it is anyway.

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey, You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com.

PHOTO OF DEANGELO IN CUST[illegible] BY PAUL KITAGAKI JR./ASSOCIATED PRESS

Not the Golden State Killer

DID OC PROSECUTORS FINGER THE WRONG MAN FOR THE MURDEROUS RAMPAGE OF A NOW-IDENTIFIED EX-COP MADMAN?

By R. Scott Moxley

As she prepared for bed on the final night of her life, 28-year-old Orange County resident Joan Virginia Anderson donned a blue nightgown and put her two kids—an infant girl and a 3-year-old boy—to bed. In the wee hours of that night—March 8, 1979—Anderson found herself awakened in bed by an intruder while her husband worked hundreds of miles away in San Jose. The rapist/killer performed his crimes and fled undetected under a clear sky. The air was still—just 2.5 mph winds—and the 49-degree temperature was typical of an early spring night in Southern California. There were no signs of forced entry into Anderson's two-story, 2,600-square-foot home on a quiet residential street six blocks west of Mile Square Park in Fountain Valley, where in coming years South Vietnamese war refugees would congregate.

The first hint of tragedy happened the next morning, when a motorist spotted Anderson's toddler roaming the streets. When police officer John Mihalik arrived shortly before 11 a.m., he saw the victim lying at the foot of her bed. Her nightgown had been pulled up, and her panties were bunched up on the floor. She'd suffered massive head wounds. Spatter on the wall above the bed's headboard indicated a vicious attack. Blood drenched a pillow case and bedsheet. "Her body was cold to the touch," Mihalik reported. He didn't think robbery was a motive, as the killer had left expensive jewelry in plain sight.

Thirty hours later, Dr. Richard I. Fukumoto, a pathologist, performed the autopsy at UCI Medical Center and spotted possible ligature marks on Anderson's ankles. Fukumoto couldn't re-enact the order of blows but noted her skull had been bashed and her face cut most probably by a steel hammer. "The injuries could be caused by a combination of the head of the hammer striking the skull and also the sides of the hammer striking the skull," he concluded. "In my opinion, she died from brain injury due to multiple skull fractures due to blunt force trauma. ... She could have lived for minutes, but there is no question in my mind she would have been unconscious."

Law-enforcement investigators searched for eyewitnesses and forensic science that might unmask the killer. Their work produced no results. But 15 months into their probe, they declared

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Not The Golden State Killer

» FROM PAGE 9

they'd solved the mystery in a non-conventional manner. Detectives hypnotized Randy Wanner, who was a friend of a suspect, and that man reportedly located subconscious memories of William Lee Evins implicating himself.

"Randy, I killed that woman," Wanner claimed Evins advised him.

That development was the last piece of the puzzle for the Orange County district attorney's office (OCDA). In June 1980, prosecutor John D. Conley okayed police officer Norman Satterfield's arrest warrant for Evins, who had been part of a construction remodeling team that worked at Anderson's Hemlock Circle residence in the weeks before the murder.

Conley believed he had strong circumstantial evidence of Evins' guilt other than the hypnosis. Namely, the suspect knew the victim. The victim allegedly found him too chatty. Evins left his home on the night of the killing, the construction worker carried a hammer in his truck, and according to a witness, he appeared suspiciously interested in a newspaper article reporting the murder; never mind that most people would be gripped by an account of the death of a person they knew.

With Evins declaring his innocence, his defense team appealed Conley's reliance on hypnotism to support a first-degree homicide charge beyond a reasonable doubt. The California Supreme Court rejected the tactic in January 1985, five years into the defendant's pretrial lockup. Two months later, officials released Evins, then re-arrested him based on a new theory. On the verge of winning freedom, the suspect allegedly confessed again, this time to James Dean Cochrum. A narcotics trafficker, cocaine addict, forger and chronic thief who used as many as 13 aliases to commit his own felonies, Cochrum worked as an informant who sought punishment reductions and housing perks by helping OCDA win weak cases. One of the snitch's handlers was Satterfield.

William Kopeny, Evins' defense attorney, destroyed Cochrum's credibility at the preliminary hearing. The judge even threw out the evidence as illegally obtained. But when Conley said he wanted to use Cochrum again at trial, and the trial court allowed it, his exasperated client—who had no criminal record—considered the prosecutor's threat. Plead guilty to second-degree murder and get out of prison up to five years earlier, or go to trial and risk a term of 25 years to life. He accepted.

But Evins never left prison. After suffering a heart attack, he died in a California penitentiary in 2013. Two years earlier, Orange County District Attorney Tony Rackauckas, the man who groomed and pampered Cochrum as a miracle-worker snitch, fought parole while portraying the case against Evins as impenetrable.

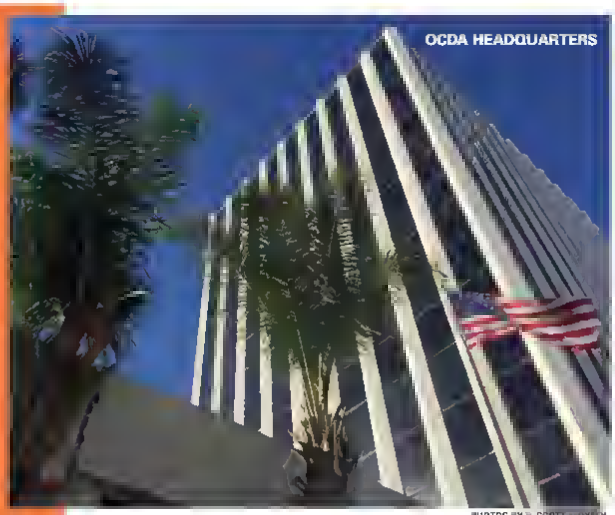
In April—nearly four decades after Anderson's murder—law-enforcement officials announced that DNA testing had conclusively identified one of the most hunted madmen in U.S. history, the so-called Golden State Killer. Prosecutors arrested 72-year-old, former Sacramento-area cop Joseph James DeAngelo for committing at least 12 cold-case murders and more than 50 sadistic rapes from 1976 to 1986. His target areas: Central and northern California, as well as Orange County.

Last month, Evins' surviving family pressed the OCDA to re-examine DNA evidence in the Anderson case. Annee Della Donna, their Laguna Beach-based attorney, told reporters DeAngelo's crimes were suspiciously similar to the Fountain Valley killing. Up for re-election to a sixth, four-year term in November, Rackauckas agreed. But, given this DA's history of protecting bad convictions, can he be trusted?

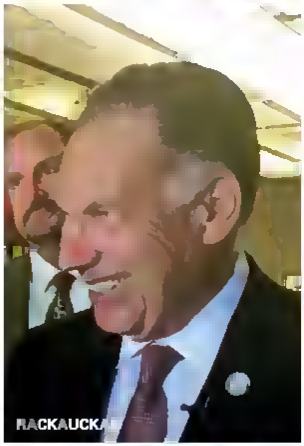
In September 1979, the same year of Anderson's murder, someone raped and attempted to fatally bludgeon 21-year-old Tustin resident Dianna D'Aiello, placing her in a coma for a month and successfully killing her fetus on the verge of birth. Orange County homicide prosecutors blamed the victim's 22-year-old husband, Kevin Lee Green, and won a conviction. According to a newspaper account, jurors felt comfortable with their verdict, concluding Green's alibi—he'd left home to get Jack in the Box cheeseburgers before the attack and saw a black man loitering at the apartment complex when he returned—"just wasn't believable."

Green served 16 years in a California prison, where a warden labeled him a model prisoner. In 1996, retested DNA evidence identified the actual killer, Gerald Parker, a convicted rapist and an African-American who, like Green, served as a U.S. Marine stationed in Orange County. Officials eventually convicted Parker on six counts of murder, six counts of rape and one of attempted murder. The California Supreme Court affirmed his death-penalty sentence in June 2017.

But, given this DA's history of protecting bad convictions, can he be be trusted?



PHOTOS BY A. SCOTT MOXLEY



On the day Green won back his freedom, prosecutors issued a statement. They reported chagrin. They also observed that "our justice system isn't 100 percent perfect."

Investigative crime reporter Michelle McNamara died two years before DeAngelo's capture, but she noted in her authoritative book on the Golden State Killer (GSK), *I'll Be Gone in the Dark*, that the suspect likely possessed "unremorseful rage" against the victims as revealed by the "ferocity" of the head wounds he inflicted. McNamara went on to write that "overkill" is "sometimes misused" in crime stories because it's often interpreted that a rage murder must mean "an unleashing of pent-up rage borne of familiarity" between personal acquaintences.

It's believed that if DeAngelo is the GSK, he began his crime spree with rapes in seven counties. He allegedly graduated to murder in February 1978 with the killing of Brian and Katie Maggiore in Sacramento County. According to a timeline provided by officials, GSK committed 20 more rapes before the next murder, this one in Santa Barbara County in the wee hours of Dec. 30, 1979. Dr. Robert Offerman and his girlfriend, Debra Alexandria Manning, were discovered slain by gunshots after they were both bound with twine.

The killer's attention turned to Orange County in 1980, if not sooner. In August, Keith and Patrice Harrington, residents of Dana Point's gated Niguel Shores community, were murdered. The killer used ligatures, raped the woman in her bed and bludgeoned the couple to death with skull blows using a brass sprinkler head taken from their ocean-view yard.

Less than six months later, the GSK is believed to have struck again in Irvine's Northwood neighborhood. Manuela Witthuhn was found face-down in her bed. She'd been tied up and raped. The killer ended her life by striking severe blows to her head with a hefty metal lamp.

The killer returned to Orange County in May 1986, perhaps his last crime. He entered the home of Janelle Cruz, who lived in the same Irvine neighborhood as Witthuhn. Cruz died from a massive head wound.

It wouldn't be difficult to place Anderson's killer on the GSK's timeline as his

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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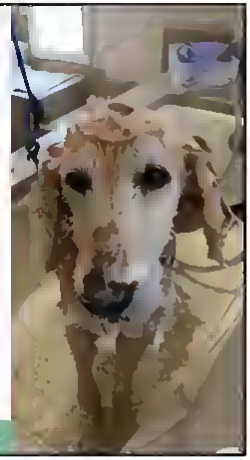

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Not The Golden State Killer

» FROM PAGE 10

first Orange County murder. The similarities between the four cases are numerous. All the female victims were attractive young females found in bed; all were bludgeoned to death, all were tied up; and all were raped by a man with no known motive or personal connection, according to investigators. Plus, each of the killings, as with the sexual assaults, were committed in the wee hours of the morning followed by undetected getaways that seemed to indicate meticulous planning.

Rackauckas, a frontline hotshot homicide prosecutor in the early '80s, took special interest in Cochrum, a petty drug dealer with a reputation for dishonesty. Over the years, he'd tried to outrun cops by using fake names, including Dennis Ray Green, Randal Bernard Brandt and James Jason Hill or by altering the spelling of his last name. He'd been dishonorably discharged from the Army for operating a check-kiting scam. Later, he ripped off American Express by stealing travelers' checks. He sold cocaine on the street and peddled stolen merchandise.

But OCDA officials saw Cochrum as the simple solution to solving flimsy cold cases. For a 1985 *Los Angeles Times* article, Rackauckas bragged that he believed Cochrum was a powerfully convincing witness for jurors. *Prolific* and *deceitful* might have been better terms.

This one snitch reported he gained uncorroborated confessions from a whopping five murder defendants: Evins for Conley; William Paul Gullet and Ronald Ewing for Rackauckas, and Adolpho Aguirre and Elliot Austin Beal for their colleague, James Cloninger, also then a deputy DA. Cloninger, who eventually became a judge, wrote an April 1985 letter to correction officers falsely claiming that Cochrum gave selfless service to prosecutors without seeking rewards.

The unholy arrangement became solidified in December 1984, when Rackauckas traveled to Utah to argue for the snitch's leniency from a felony prison escape charge there. After getting him back to Orange County, the prosecutor placed him in a more comfortable setting at the Anaheim jail, granted him lengthy sun-tanning privileges, ordered less correctional supervision and waited for Cochrum to perform his magic.

Precisely a month after the Supreme Court tossed out Conley's hypnosis strategy in 1985, Cochrum claimed he obtained a case-renewing confession. According to the snitch, a county-employed plumber, Richard Grier, working in jail module A-4, asked Evins, "Why are you here?" Evins replied, "Because I supposedly killed somebody."

According to Cochrum, the three men talked for about an hour. "Mr. Evins was laying on his bunk in cell one in Mod 4," the snitch testified under Conley's guidance. "Myself and the plumber were standing out in the walkway. I was directly in front of the cell door, which was open."

When Grier left, Evins—known otherwise to "go sky high" if fellow inmates inquired about his charges—allegedly said, "[Grier] is stupid like all the rest, if he thinks I didn't do it." Cochrum contacted the OCDA, reported his claim, thrilled prosecutors and negotiated to keep secret any responsive benefits he might win so a future jury would believe his story, according to an audio recording played in court.

But Cochrum's tales were full of holes. Just two months after the alleged confession, he couldn't remember details of the three-way conversation, including anything he'd said. In the snitch's rendition of events, Evins admitted he strangled Anderson during the day. The autopsy revealed no strangulation, and the pathologist timed her death an hour after midnight.

William Kelley, one of Evins' defense lawyers, summoned Grier to the stand. Minutes earlier, the plumber saw Cochrum in the courthouse. In a working criminal-justice system, the following exchanges would have devastated the prosecutor's case:

Kelley: Was that fellow [Cochrum] ever engaged in a conversation between yourself and Mr. Evins?
Grier: No, sir.
Kelley: Are you quite sure about that?
Grier: Positive.
The defense lawyer underscored the blow to the informant's credibility.
Kelley: Was anyone else present while you were speaking to Mr. Evins?
Grier: No, there was nobody present.
Kelley: Was there anyone standing right next to you?
Grier: No, sir.
Kelley: Did Mr. Evins ever admit the murdering of anybody in your presence?
Grier: No, sir.
Kelley: He did admit just the opposite?
Grier: Yes, he did. He said that he couldn't murder anyone.
In a later portion of the hearing, Kopeny, the other defense lawyer, returned to the issue.
Kopeny: During the time you were talking to Mr. Evins, was anybody else in your immediate area of, say, within 5 feet of you?
Grier: No, sir. Never.

The defense then called Patrick Calcagno, a deputy who patrolled the modular housing Evins and Cochrum. Over Conley's repeated objections, Calcagno testified about the character of the prosecutor's key witness. "I don't believe Mr Cochrum is very honest," the deputy stated. "I don't believe he is honest at all."

Conley didn't appreciate the testimony, saying, "I would like to interpose a further objection as to relevancy."

In Orange County's ongoing, 5-year-old jailhouse-informant scandal, Assistant Public Defender Scott Sanders proved that Rackauckas, Sheriff Sandra Hutchens

and members of their staffs conspired for years to win convictions by cheating. They conducted "capers" with informants secretly employed to illegally obtain confessions from pretrial defendants, hid evidence, committed perjury, rationalized false statements and ridiculed their critics. Fifty-four years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled government officials, including their agents, including informants, cannot question charged defendants about their cases without their lawyers' knowledge. To do so violates the target's constitutional rights against self-incrimination. Such deception in Orange County has wrecked 19 felony cases so far, while law-enforcement officials here continue to claim no wrongdoing.

The resistance to reform is entrenched. For 40 years, there has been a common thread in our local criminal-justice system: onetime office mates Rackauckas and Conley, who is nowadays a superior court judge assigned to the county's most serious trials. While exposing the present-day snitch scandal, Sanders uncovered how the pair used dubious informants such as Cochrum in the 1980s and, remarkably, how they continue to work in league to protect each other from exposure.

While handling snitch-tied *People v. Daniel Wozniak*, Sanders asked Conley, the presiding judge, to recuse himself given his misuse of Cochrum and failure to comply with requirements to surrender embarrassing evidence on informants. The judge refused. Sanders asked Conley for never-produced records pertaining to Cochrum, who is deceased, and the mysterious Orange County Informant Index, which—in portions pried out of the agency by court order—show prosecutors presented compromised informants as honest broker to clueless juries. The judge refused, asserting there is no snitch scandal or proof of outrageous government conduct or, as the California Court of Appeal declared, troubling lapses in prosecutorial ethics.

There probably wasn't an Orange County judge who wanted to bury the Cochrum fiasco in *Evins* more than Conley. But Rackauckas pounced in glee. His public-relations office issued an October 2015 release celebrating the judge with the headline "Court finds public defender's accusations of misconduct by OCDA to be untrue."

Nonetheless, Sanders maintains Rackauckas' office "has a long, persistent and alarming history of concealing informant-related and other evidence required to be disclosed by statutory and constitutional rules, while consistently refusing to address recognizable concerns about these issues."

It's understandable that prosecutors would feel sensitive about people questioning their convictions. What isn't understandable are prosecutors who block independent investigations when potential credible evidence surfaces of a wrongful conviction. For example, in the Cochrum-tied *Gullet* case, Rackauckas refuses to use modern advances in DNA testing to double-check if OCDA's court win was legitimate.

In another case, *People v. Kenneth Clair*, one of the only eyewitnesses to a 1984 Santa Ana rape/murder told arriving cops the perpetrator was definitely Caucasian. Clair is a dark-skinned African-American. Testing of DNA from the crime scene did not bolster the case against Clark, who was transported to death row, and Rackauckas refuses to share the evidence with the defense. The convicted killer told me in a 2016 jail interview he believes the DNA belongs to a Caucasian, which is why the OCDA is hiding it.

Rackauckas' office in 2005 quietly asked the Orange County Crime Lab to alter its DNA findings to support robbery and carjacking charges against James Ochoa, a 20-year-old Buena Park resident. The OCDA won a conviction and sent Ochoa to a Southern California prison, where he was almost killed in a stabbing. About 16 months later, legitimate DNA analysis at an out-of-county lab produced the identity of the actual bandit. Terrified about the callousness of the local criminal-justice system, Ochoa quickly moved out of state.

Will the Evins conviction—first questioned by the *Weekly* in 2015, a challenge ignored by the OCDA—be added to the list? Rackauckas' office has possessed forensic-science evidence from the Anderson crime scene for 39 years. Law-enforcement officials identified DeAngelo's DNA months ago.

Did Conley convict an innocent man? The pressure on Rackauckas, the judge's pal, must be enormous.

"It's too early to tell if there's similarities or not [between the Anderson killer and DeAngelo]," Susan Kang Schroeder, the DA's media flack, told reporters in July. "We don't know."

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fri/08/10

[CONVENTIONS]

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OzCon

For fans of all things *Wizard of Oz*, the beacon has been lit! Kellogg West Conference Center at Cal Poly Pomona will be hosting the 54th Annual OzCon International. Fans can enjoy numerous panels, presentations, vendors, games, parties, an auction and a cosplay masquerade over three days. This year's theme is "The Tin Woodman of Oz," and the featured guests include James Ortiz, creator of the off-Broadway hit *The Woodsman*; film historian Aljean Harmetz, author of the critically acclaimed *The Making of the Wizard of Oz*; and Andy Mangels, the producer of the DVD edition (as well as the soundtrack CD) of the 1974 feature film *Journey Back to Oz*. Just follow the yellow brick road.

OzCon at Kellogg West Conference Center, Cal Poly Pomona, 3801 W. Temple Ave., Bldg. 76, Pomona, www.ozconinternational.com. 10 a.m., also Sat.-Sun. $12.50-$135. —SCOTT FEINBLATT

[FESTIVALS]

All That Jazz

Long Beach Jazz Festival

The 31st annual Long Beach Jazz Festival starts its three-day run with an extra-smooth night headlined by storied guitarist Jonathan Butler, who kicked off a decades-long career connecting jazz, gospel, and R&B with a stint in highly rated (and collectible) funk outfit Pacific Express while growing up in his native South Africa. Support comes from Grammy-nominated R&B singer Maysa Leak as well as saxophonists Kim Waters and Marion Meadows, who's touted by his label as having the "smoothest saxophone tone on the planet." Plus, Saturday features formidable bassist Marcus Miller, a session player and composer whose discography is absolutely bristling with legendary collaborators—in fact, he was in a band called Legends with, you know, legends—and Sunday night caps the fest with fusion originator and visionary Stanley Clarke.

Long Beach Jazz Festival at Rainbow Lagoon Park, 400 E. Shoreline Dr., Long Beach, longbeachjazzfestival.com. 6 p.m., also Sat.-Sun. $60-$180. —CHRIS ZIEGLER

sat/08/11

[FESTIVALS]

PLAY ON IBUYPOWER

Game Fest

Gamers are invited to this two-day gamea-thon where you'll be able to play as many games as you'd like (including *Overwatch*, *League of Legends*, *Super Smash Bros.* and more) in the Free-to-Play Arena. You'll also gain entry to special raffles and giveaways, and you'll be able to check out the Virtual Reality Amusement Park, where you can visualize yourself aboard all manner of amusement rides in an alternate virtual world. Bring along your fellow game enthusiasts and delve into the ultimate digital playground—and when you need a dose of fresh air and sunshine, your admission pass gains you entry to the OC Fair, too.

MORE ONLINE OCWEEKLY.COM

IBUYPOWER Game Fest at OC Fair, 88 Fair Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-1500, www.ibuypower.com. 11 a.m., also Sun. $17.50-$25. —AIMEE MURILLO

[ART]

In Dreams

'Judithe Hernandez: A Dream Is the Shadow of Something Real'

Although she's not commonly described as a surrealist, there's a surreal, dreamy quality to Judithe Hernandez's art that contributes an eerie, yet calm feeling upon seeing it. A venerated figure of the Los Angeles muralist movement in the '70s, Hernandez has presented her colorful pastel murals on paper across the world in institutions such as the Smithsonian, the National Museum of Mexican Art, the Getty and beyond, as well as public sites including the Metro Expo Line in Santa Monica. This exhibition—the first solo show by a Chicana artist at the Museum of Latin American Art—of Hernandez's latest works on paper promises an exciting dive into the evocative, vivid mind of the longtime female artist.

"Judithe Hernandez: A Dream Is the Shadow of Something Real" at the Museum of Latin American Art, 628 Alamitos Ave., Long Beach, (562) 437-1689, molaa.org. 11 a.m. Through Feb. 17, 2019. $7-$10. —AIMEE MURILLO

sun/08/12

[FESTIVALS]

Gone Camping

Alt 98.7 Summer Camp

We're at the peak of summer-festival season, and the *Queen Mary* Events Park in Long Beach is one of the top fest hosts, dishing out events every weekend. Head over for ALT 98.7's annual Summer Camp, an alt-rock and pop concert set against an ocean backdrop. Headliners Death Cab for Cutie will no doubt tease some new songs from *Thank You for Today*, which comes out next week. Also on the lineup are Odesza, Cbvrches, Judah & the Lion, and many more. Bonus: If you want to get out of the sun, the *Queen Mary*'s Observation Bar and Art Deco Lounge is mere steps away.

ALT 98.7 Summer Camp at *Queen Mary* Events Park, 1126 Queens Hwy., Long Beach, (562) 912-4451, www.queenmary.com. 4 p.m. $47.50–$99.50. —ERIN DEWITT

[FOOD & DRINK]

Savory Sunday

Hi-Time Chili Cook-Off

The annual Hi-Time Wine Cellars-hosted Chili Cook-Off is so much more than the name would suggest. Yes, you'll get to taste a smorgasbord of chili recipes, made by cooks vying for awards and recognition from the judges and attendees. Beyond that, there will be plenty of local food and libations, including options from Bootlegger's Brewery, Blinking Owl Distillery, 17th Street Deli, the Cannery, Sgt. Pepperonis and more. Beyond *that*, this year's Cook-Off is "Back to the '80s"-themed, so visitors are invited to dress in their most stylish attire from that decade to maximize on the fun. To inspire goodwill, the event serves as a benefit for the Boys and Girls Club of Central Orange Coast.

Hi-Time Chili Cook-Off at Hi-Time Wine Cellars, 250 Ogle St., Costa Mesa, (949) 650-8463, www.hitimewine.net. Noon. $10–$25. —AIMEE MURILLO

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mon/08/13

[CLASSES]

Roam If You Want To

Beer and Gear: Women's Backpacking Basics

Ladies, if hiking and camping overnight has always interested you but inexperience has rendered you anxious, head to this free REI event with Bruery Terreux to learn the basics of backpacking and preparation, what to wear to feel your most comfortable, what helpful equipment and gear to bring, trail etiquette, and the seven "leave no trace" principles hikers follow. Adventure is out there—but preparation and know-how are the best tools for your safety. Happy exploring!

Beer and Gear: Women's Backpacking Basics at Bruery Terreux, 1174 N. Grove St., Anaheim, (714) 996-6258, www.rei.com. 7 p.m. Free. —AIMEE MURILLO

tue/08/14

[FILM]

Two for the Road

Charade

For whatever reason, 1963's *Charade* isn't one of the films that pops to mind when you think of terminally classy actors Audrey Hepburn and Cary Grant—more likely, it's *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and *North By Northwest*. But this delightful caper stars Hepburn as a widow who learns her late husband was involved in a heist of more than $250,000, while Grant plays a mysterious stranger whose true identity is constantly questionable. In true '60s romantic screwball-comedy fashion, the pair team up to uncover the truth—and fall in love. See it in a luxurious outdoor experience worthy of the Hollywood legends, with wine, popcorn and lounge furniture.

Charade at Casa Romantica, 415 Avenida Granada, San Clemente, (949) 498-2139, www.casaromantica.org. 8 p.m. $5. —AIMEE MURILLO

wed/08/15

[FILM]

PEAK WILLIS
Die Hard

Last month marked the 30th anniversary of *Die Hard*, and it's safe to say the legacies of the film and Bruce Willis have endured. Often replicated but never duplicated, the film remains among the most influential action flicks of all time. Playing John McClane taking on Hans Gruber and his terrorist pals turned Willis into a bona-fide action star and allowed his career as a leading man to flourish, though it was recently panned in a *Comedy Central Roast*. If you've never experienced the thrills and spills of *Die Hard* in a theater, then head to this screening at the Regency South Coast Village. Yippee-ki-yay!

Die Hard at Regency South Coast Village, 1561 W. Sunflower Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 557-5701, www.regencymovies.com. 7:30 p.m. $8. —WYOMING REYNOLDS

[FILM]

Multiple Identities
Lost Highway

Adore or abhor him, director David Lynch's contribution to iconic style and weird storytelling lands him on any cinephile's must-see list, most of which is conveniently screened at Orange County's No. 1 arthouse. In his 1997 sadistically sexy, surrealist, noir psychodrama, Lynch plays games with the audience as well as the characters, one of whom delivers the Lynchian line "I think there's no such thing as a bad coincidence." Surrender to the mirror imagery and doppelgangerism of this cult classic with an amazing cast that includes Bill Pullman and Patricia Arquette (twice) to a soundtrack featuring Lou Reed, David Bowie and Trent Reznor. If it doesn't work as film, it's at least one hell of a music video.

Lost Highway at the Frida Cinema, 305 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 285-9422, thefridacinema.org. 2:30, 5:30 & 8 p.m. $7-$10. —ANDREW TONKOVICH

thu/08/16

[FILM]

Full Circle
Jezebel

There's an old Elvis tune that says, "Ever since the world began, a hard-headed woman been a thorn in the side of man." So, too, is the titular Jezebel in this film, which starred Bette Davis alongside Henry Fonda. The flick, set in 1852 New Orleans, was released in the late 1930s, riding the coattails of Antebellum fever brought on by *Gone With the Wind*. The role of the hard-headed Southern Jeze-belle was said to have been offered to Davis as a consolation for not scoring that of Scarlett O'Hara. *Jezebel* was the first film shown at the Lido in Newport Beach, which celebrates its 80th anniversary with a one-night-only screening of that same flick. It was only fitting that Davis, who was a resident of Corona del Mar at the time, opened the iconic Art Deco marvel.

Jezebel at the Lido Theatre, 3459 Via Lido, Newport Beach, (949) 673-8350; www.regencymovies.com. 7 p.m. $20. —TAYLOR HAMBY

[THEATER]

RETURN OF THE DIVA
End of the Rainbow

Peter Quilter's Tony-nominated look at the final months of Judy Garland's life takes us to 1968 London, where Garland, with the support of her young fiancé Mickey Deans, prepares for her upcoming five-week run at the Talk of the Town nightclub (formerly the London Hippodrome). Still battling her addictions and a vicious press, Garland rises to the occasion, belting out her most iconic tunes, including "For Me and My Gal," "The Trolley Song," "TheManThatGot Away" and "Over the Rainbow." *BroadwayWorld* praised Angela Ingersoll's characterization of Garland as "powerful" and "breathtaking" during her previous performances in Chicago and St. Louis, and this production, staged by La Mirada Theatre and McCoy Rigby Entertainment and directed by Michel Matthews, is sure to please even the most die-hard Garland fans.

End of the Rainbow at Laguna Playhouse, 606 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach, (949) 497-2787, www.lagunaplayhouse.com. 7:30 p.m. Through Sept. 12. $75-$105. —SR DAVIES

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11/15	THE RIHGSTON TRIO

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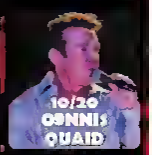
9/27 AUGIE MEYERS

10/7 THE GUESS WHO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Another Dim-mension

Ooak Kitchen in Buena Park serves vegetarian dim sum

BY EDWIN GOEI

When people ask me where to find vegetarian dim sum, I tell them it'd be easier to locate an Indian steakhouse or a healthy KFC. Dim sum, by its nature, is not vegetarian. Even if you avoid all the usual dumplings that have pork and shrimp as main ingredients, you'd still encounter pork fat or traces of shrimp in the ones labeled vegetable or leek. And on other dishes you'd assume are animal-free, you'd be wrong. There's chicken broth in the congee and oyster sauce all over the gai lan.

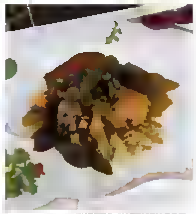
But now comes Ooak Kitchen, a dim sum restaurant that takes the "is it or isn't it?" uncertainty off the table. Its dim sum is completely and proudly vegetarian. Pronounced "oh-ak," the name actually stands for "One of a Kind," and right now, this restaurant is exactly that. (There was a previous location in Culver City, but it lasted only four months.)

Standing at the very top floor of the Source in Buena Park, Ooak's ornate, moon-shaped entryway is guarded by two lion statues. The dining room is spare, with walls decorated in auspicious motifs of fish and gold and tables covered with paper. The blond-wood chairs look as if they came from Sears' garden department.

Make no mistake, however: Ooak's food is not cheap. Reportedly part of a Guangdong-based Cantonese vegetarian-restaurant chain, its price points follow other upscale Chinese brands such as Meizhou Dongpo, catering to a new market of nouveau riche immigrants with money to blow. The standard char siu bao here costs $6 for a serving of three. The har gao ticks at $8 for four pieces. But you can tell a lot of research and development went into reverse-engineering these vegetarian dim sum to taste like, well, dim sum.

The har gao is uncanny. If it were served from Capital Seafood's roll-up carts, I would still conclude it's a very good dumpling. Pleated into the classic bonnet shape, the skin is as thin and delicate as they come. But it was the filling that had me so convinced it was shrimp that I ate the second piece with gobs of house-made chile oil to complete the experience.

Ooak's chiu chow dumplings—translucent half-moons traditionally containing dried shrimp, ground pork and mushrooms—hit all the same notes with nothing but vegetables, albeit in a higher octave. I should mention at this point that the restaurant does not employ MSG or artificial meat, which makes its achievement all the more impressive. I liken it to a YouTube cover artist who's somehow captured the original spirit of a rock song with only an acoustic guitar.



PHOTOS BY EDWIN GOEI

There are, however, some tells. The xiu mai doesn't have the dense texture of ones made with pork, it actually falls apart the moment you pick it up. The least convincing dim sum is the char siu bao, especially if you tear it open to locate the char sui but find instead the pink, barely flavored filling of indeterminate origin. But the bread itself is fluffy and sweet.

Strictly vegetable-based dishes such as the string beans stir-fried with an excess of dried chile peppers and the tofu triangles of the "Crispy Bells" are served in artsy bowls and sprinkled with a crunchy flurry of toasted oats—an addition that ups their impact.

The most expensive thing to order, at $32, is the Steak Mushroom on Fire, which is not a dim sum dish, but ironically the only thing that comes out on a cart. The theatrics begin as soon as your server flicks on the camp stove that heats a clay pot. In it, she fries a rosemary sprig and two giant pieces of rehydrated shiitake in vegan butter. She proceeds to douse it with black pepper sauce and, finally, an entire glass of flammable rice wine. She closes the lid, advises you to step back, then ignites the fumes with a chimney lighter. When the flames subside, she takes out the mushrooms, slices the "steak," and lays the pieces atop mashed sweet potatoes, spooning over it all the pan sauce. It's chewy and doesn't taste at all like a steak, but you don't for a second regret spending the money.

You may feel the same way about the $18 coconut koi dessert, for which coconut milk jelly is formed into the shape of koi fish swimming in a small pond of jellied coconut water. Light, refreshing and artistic, it symbolizes Ooak to a tee.

And with Ooak, I now have the answer as to where to get vegetarian dim sum. It's also the only restaurant I know of where dim sum can be had for dinner, which is rarer still.

OOAK KITCHEN

6980 Beach Blvd., Ste. H303, Buena Park, (714) 522-6625, www.ooakkitchen.com. Open Mon.-Thurs., noon-3 p.m. & 5-9 p.m., Fri., noon-3 p.m. & 5-10 p.m.; Sat., noon-10 p.m., Sun., noon-9 p.m. Dim sum, $4-$8, mains, $12-$32. Beer and wine.

WHAT THE ALE

» GREG NAGEL

How to Pick a Beerfest

You may get a notification on Facebook or Instagram with a buddy tagging your name on some sponsored beer festival's post. It would say something like, "Bro/Chica we should go!" But slow your roll. I've been to hundreds of beer festivals, and it lately seems as if everyone is trying to cash in on the craft movement.

Sadly, not only do these people not know anything about beer, but it also seems as though they know nothing about producing a quality event. Here are my top five things to look for to avoid a total shitshow:

1. Are tickets on a daily deal website? Chances are the event will be oversold. This usually means a long line to get in, revolving lines for average beer, huge lines to pee, lines for food—and no water. Such sites might be great for dog grooming or spa sessions, but they're never good for a beer festival.

2. Does the festival website list only breweries that are available inside Angel Stadium? Unfortunately, most of those brands are not actual craft breweries, and the beer you'll be served is likely available year-round at your local 7-Eleven. Look for Saint Archer, Elysian, Blue Point, Goose Island, Golden Road or 10 Barrel. If you see them, save your money, dress up in lederhosen/dirndl and take your party to a convenience store.

3. Is the festival in a parking lot? *Mmmm*, there's nothing more awesome than navigating a maze of collapsible canopies on hot summertime blacktop. Look for a festival that has trees, grass, sand, or some other comfortable space to enjoy the day.

4. Does the event support a nonprofit? Craft brewers are great about donating their beer to support the community, so if you see local independent breweries supporting an event, it's because they believe in the festival producers. If you don't, skip it.

5. Does the festival use terms such as *suds*, *ice-cold beer* or *microbrews*? These are antiquated terms by today's standards, and you should probably stay clear.

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CYNTHIA HOLLEDO

Eat+DRINK 2018 OC WEEKLY

YOUR GUIDE TO OC & LB'S BEST RESTAURANTS

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Always wear your seat belt and please don't drink and drive.

SARAH BENNETT

Second to Naan

Flamin Curry's affordable Indian fast food arrives in Belmont Heights

LONG BEACH LUNCH
» SARAH BENNETT

It was only last month that this column space was extolling the virtues of Wok N Roll, a Chinese fast-food institution whose continuously replaced steam trays, cooked-to-order vegan and vegetarian options, and a friendly staff of extended family made it one of the best places in Long Beach putting a two-item combo into a Styrofoam box.

In researching that piece, I was compelled to reconnect with some of my other favorite locally owned fast-food counters around town. Taste of India on Long Beach Boulevard, Wa Wa in the East Village, the handful of Filipino *turo turo* joints on the Westside. In the process, I discovered a handful of new restaurants opening up in the same what-you-see-is-what-you-get style.

These trips not only solidified an appreciation for the wide range of food from around the world that's still affordable here, but it also proves that these working-class, grab-and-go counters are not only remnants of Long Beach's past, but also an integral part of its culinary future.

But for the price and the location, the most promising of all the new buffet-style fast food in town is Flamin Curry, a 2-month-old walk-up with 15 seats plopped into a former frame store in Belmont Heights.

As its name implies, Flamin Curry's 10 steam trays are stocked with curries of varying spice levels covering a panoply of colors and seasonings, all ubiquitous of Northern Indian cuisine. Behind the glass on the vegetarian side is always a creamy vegetable korma, chunky aloo gobi (potato and cauliflower), goopy eggplant and saag, the Indian equivalent of creamed spinach.

The other half of the options are stewed meats, some familiar (such as the lilting sweetness of chicken tikka masala's tomato and cream) and others house inventions, such as a black pepper chicken inspired, no doubt, by India's Chinese and Southeast Asian neighbors. A goat curry—does anywhere else even make this in Long Beach anymore?—is cooked overnight to loosen the notoriously tough meat so that by the time it's served, swimming in a soup spiced with garam masala, the flesh is ready to melt on your tongue as if the sacrament.

"We don't be heve in fine dining," one of the employees said proudly when asked about Flamin Curry's other locations, which include the similarly set up Curry Huts in Pico Rivera and Fullerton. "Not everybody has time or can afford to eat Indian food as a sit-down meal."

Flamin Curry might not serve certified-organic meats, farmers' market veggies or chef-driven cuisine like some of the newer restaurants entering the local scene, but its dedication to serving the best food at the lowest prices possible reflects an important democratic outlook.

Appetizers from crunchy egg rolls to spicy, turmeric-loaded pakoras are all less than $5. Two-item combos cost only $8.99. A clay oven installed in the back (where, I like to imagine, decades of family portraits were once matted and mounted when it was Hall of Frames) produces fresh naan on demand, as well as boneless chicken tikka, hand-formed shish kebabs and more.

You can take home a whole, red-rubbed tandoori chicken for $12.99. And with the addition of a few sides, you can feed your whole family for less than $20.

FLAMIN CURRY
3344 E. Broadway, Long Beach, (562) 343-7319; www.flamincurrylb.com

PHOTOS BY GREG NAGEL

Summertime Livin'

Water Grill's raw bar and a Pimm's Cup riff

When a restaurant has multiple bars to choose from, it can be a game of being that awkward teenager trying to find the cool table to sit at. At Water Grill, across from South Coast Plaza, my choice of bar neighbors consists of various cellphone-blabbing businessmen, a current-age stunt-double cast of *Sex and the City*, and various makeup-counter girls venting about their unintentional Bob Ross-inspired mall-facial lifestyle.

On the way in, the raw bar was quick to set my slickery seafood mood. Bivalves are tucked snugly in blankets of ice, cozy and unaware of their deliciousness. Little do they know, I'm hungry for a sampler, with half a dozen knocking me back around $17. My first choice of bar, which I call "the Old Gregg" (because of its scaly, manfish colors), is usually my first choice to belly up to, but it's unfortunately full.

"Is this seat taken?" I ask the MAC girls seated at the bark copper bar.

Their dramatic eyebrows are locked into a display of surprise. "It's all yours," one says, putting down her pink-liquid-filled coupe cocktail glass kissed with purple lipstick.

"I'll start off with a Cocchi Americano," I say to the bartender, who deals me a cocktail napkin like a blackjack dealer.

Now in my proverbial happy place—at a gorgeous bar with hilarious barflies and an eager staff—I go for a whim. "What cocktail pairs best with oysters?"

Andrew Paniagua, one of their head bartenders, offers an off-menu solution to my mothershucking problem: "Here's our Picadilly Circus, with Pimm's No. 1, Aperol, lemon, simple syrup, and a charge of tonic water, garnished with cucumber."

The drink is sort of a riff on a traditional Pimm's Cup, but with Aperol and tonic water instead of lemon-lime soda. On its own, Pimm's No. 1 is somewhat a sessionable booze at only 25 percent ABV and was put together by James Pimm in 1823, mainly as a digestif. At the time, he also happened to own an oyster bar in London, one not too far from Piccadilly Circus, which is a street connection where various tourists and locals congregate to this day.

The beautiful thing about the Piccadilly Circus cocktail isn't just the Pimm's oyster-bar tie-in, but also that the drink is soft and delicate. The cucumber finish enhances the natural melon-like brine that some oyster species exude. On my sampler platter, my fave was easily the Sandstone, which, according to the farmer, is bagged on a beach in Washington, where the waters are cool. It's briny on the start, with a melon-like sweetness on the finish. Be sure to grab this summertime combo while it lasts!

EAT & DRINK THIS NOW
» GREG NAGEL

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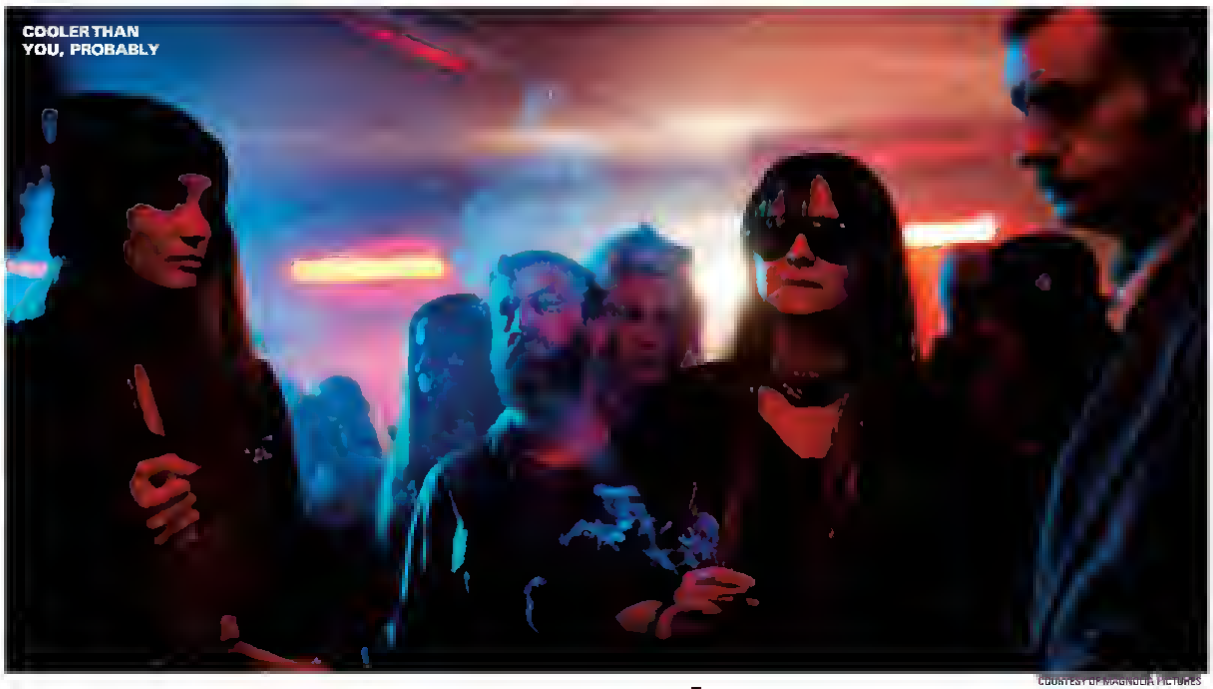

COOLER THAN YOU, PROBABLY

COURTESY OF MAGNOLIA PICTURES

Not Your Femme Fatale

Nico, 1988 resurrects the spirit of the German singer

BY AIMEE MURILLO

Is it incendiary to say that, when comparing both of their post-Velvet Underground stints, I prefer Nico's musical output much more than Lou Reed's? Don't harass me, music nerds—it's just my opinion. But when we look at those we venerate in music history, Reed obviously got wider acclaim than his on-again, off-again collaborator.

Nico—who started her career as a model before gallivanting with Andy Warhol's Factory superstars, which led her to a feature role in the Velvet Underground's debut album—hasn't enjoyed the same level of veneration, or even interest. Instead, the icy German blonde has long been relegated to the margins of rock history for being tangentially associated as either someone's muse or girlfriend during the late '60s, before she traveled back to Europe to craft her own career. Asked if he knew of her post-'60s whereabouts, Warhol said, "[Nico] became a fat junkie and disappeared."

Because of Nico's noncommercial appeal and rampant drug use, that flippant statement was only half true. In Susanna Nicchiarelli's film, *Nico, 1988*, the post-Velvet Underground life and career of the singer born Christa Päffgen is retold, with magnificent raw power by its star, Dutch actress Trine Dyrholm.

The film is part road movie, part biopic, and according to the director's statement, Dyrholm's approach to playing Nico was to perform an interpretation, not an imitation, which many actors in the theater world would do to portray lost icons. Janis Joplin, Lester Bangs, Judy Garland, Miles Davis, Bob Dylan, et al. have received such a treatment, but Dyrholm presents a mesmerizing Nico that, with her incredible vocal skills (she performed covers of Nico's songs for the film), embodies the spirit of the late singer.

Nico, 1988 depicts the last two years of Nico's life, including the European tour during which she is understandably trying to shed the skin of her '60s life. Nico—now a dark brunette who prefers to be addressed by her given name in person—suffers through interview after interview, with invasive questions about her drug use, her memories of her days recording with Velvet Underground, and her son Ari's (Sandor Funtek) habitual drug use and suicide attempts.

"I'm here with Lou Reed's femme fatale!" one radio DJ exclaims over the airwaves.

"Don't call me that. I don't like it," Nico darkly replies.

"My real career actually started *after* I left the Velvet Underground," she asserts during another radio interview.

As she and her band mates drive through Europe in an unglamorous tour van together, Nico grapples with her heroin addiction, which often leads to bouts of anger and tempestuousness. It also heavily contributed to changes in her physical appearance, although the singer intimates a sense of liberation in ugliness.

In a scene in which she's preparing to go onstage, she looks in the mirror and asks her manager, Richard (John Gordon Sinclair), "Am I ugly?"

"Yes," Richard replies.

"Good—I wasn't happy when I was beautiful," Nico dryly states.

We also play witness to strong musical performances, whether they're in bars, outdoor stages, fancy hotels or at a Prague university, where rock concerts were forbidden at the time. The latter concert is where Dyrholm seriously shines. Singing "My Heart is Empty" with such fierce, feral abandon, the actress relinquishes all vanity as she thrusts the audience into a dance frenzy, even as the concert is raided by police.

Where the movie feels lacking are in the minor subplots of the musicians in Nico's band and their revolving romances.

Nico's relationship with Ari is portrayed with warmth and honesty, as is the prison house of addiction, extracting poetry from pain and the tragedy of her talent being unappreciated, either by the Warhols of the world, humorless interviewers or whoever.

It's not your typical story of rock & roll excess and self-destruction, but just the same, its subject matter is granted a cinematic redemption. It's the type of tribute the late singer truly deserved.

AMURILLO@OCWEEKLY.COM

NICO, 1988 **was written and directed by Susanna Nicchiarelli and stars Trine Dyrholm, John Gordon Sinclair, Sandor Funtek and Anamaria Marinca. Opens Fri.**

Only One Truth

BY MATT COKER

LUCAS FILMS

8th Grade. An introverted girl (Elsie Fisher) tries to survive her disastrous eighth-grade year. *Art Theatre, 2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 438-5435. Thurs., Aug. 9, 1, 3:15, 6 & 8:15 p.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

Isle of Dogs. By executive decree, all the canine pets of Megasaki City have been exiled, which sends 12-year-old Atari off to find his bodyguard dog. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., Aug. 9, 2, 5:30, 8 & 10 p.m. $7-$10.*

Drums Corps International: Big, Loud and Live 15. See and hear 15 of the top performing corps battling to become the 2018 world champion. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Thurs., Aug. 9, 3:30 p.m. $18.*

Coco. With a single strum of his idol's guitar, Miguel is sent to the Land of the Dead, where he will remain unless he finds his way back to the Land of the Living before the holiday ends. *Frontier Park, 1400 Mitchell Ave., Tustin, (714) 573-3326. Thurs., Aug. 9, activities, 5:30 p.m., screening, dusk. Free; also at Placentia Champions Sports Complex, 505 N. Jefferson, Placentia, (714) 993-8232; and Pearson Park Amphitheatre, 401 N. Lemon St., Anaheim, (714) 765-5274. Fri., 8 p.m. Free.*

Call Me by Your Name. Charming American doctoral student Oliver goes to an Italian villa to serve as the intern for an eminent Greco-Roman culture professor. But Oliver and the professor's son fall in love. This screening raises funds for Orange County LGBT Pride. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., Aug. 9. 7:30 p.m. $10-$20.*

Despicable Me 3. The Minions want back their old crime boss, but Gru considers himself retired. *Lake Forest Sports Park, 28000 Rancho Pkwy., Lake Forest; ca-lakeforest.civicplus.com. Fri., 7:30 p.m. Free.*

The Secret Life of Pets. A terrier enjoys a comfortable life in New York until his owner adopts a giant, unruly canine, and both pooches wind up in a truck bound for the pound. *Yorba Regional Park, 7600 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, (714) 973-6638. Fri., dusk. Free.*

Killer Klowns From Outer Space. Two teens investigate a comet that crashed outside their small sleepy town. They discover an invasion by murderous aliens who resemble circus clowns. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 8:30 p.m. Free.*

The Rocky Horror Picture Show. Live shadow cast troupe K.A.O.S. celebrates its fourth anniversary at Frida, which advises audience members to get tickets fast, as these shows invariably sell out. It's Midnight Insanity that shimmies to "The Time Warp" in Long Beach. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 11:30 p.m. $7-$10; also at Art Theatre, (562) 438-5435. Sat., 11:55 p.m. $8.50-$11.50.*

Star Wars: The Last Jedi. Luke Skywalker helps Rey develop her newly discovered abilities. Meanwhile, the Resistance prepares for battle with the First Order. *Beachfront Cinema at Huntington State Beach, Tower 5, Beach Boulevard and Pacific Coast Highway, Huntington Beach, beachfrontcinema.com. Sat., 5 p.m. $9.99-$49.99.*

Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me. The final week of life for Twin Peaks high schooler Laura Palmer coincides with the disappearance of an FBI man and Special Agent Dale Cooper's visions that another killing looms. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sat.-Sun., 8 p.m. $7-$10.*

Grave of the Fireflies. Seita and his younger sister Setsuko are forced to fend for themselves in the aftermath of fires that swept entire cities from the face of the Earth. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Sun., 12:55 p.m. (dubbed in English); Mon., 7 p.m. (English subtitles); Wed., 7 p.m. (dubbed). $12.50.*

Rachel Hollis Presents: Made for More. Hollis aims to use her story to inspire women to chase their biggest dreams. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Mon., 7:30 p.m. $15.*

Lost Highway. A couple receive videotapes at their door that unlock a mystery concerning a second couple. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Tues.-Wed., 2:30, 5:30 & 8:30 p.m. $7-$10.*

Million Dollar Baby. A determined woman works with a hardened trainer to become a professional boxer. *Costa Mesa Donald Dungan Library, Community Room, 1855 Park Ave., Costa Mesa, (949) 646-8845. Tues., 4:45 p.m. Free.*

Blood Fest. Owen Egerton portrays the charismatic showman behind a festival celebrating the most iconic horror movies. Behind-the-scenes footage is included in this one-night only screening event. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Tues., 7:30 p.m. $12.50.*

Jumanji. The original 1995 comedy has two kids finding and playing a magical board game, which unleashes seemingly unstoppable forces. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, 25471 Rancho Niguel Rd., Laguna Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Tues., 7:30 p.m. $9.*

Die Hard. John McClane tries to stop a terrorist plot to take everyone hostage at the company Christmas party of his ex-wife. *Regency South Coast Village, 1561 W. Sunflower Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 557-5701. Wed., 7:30 p.m. $9.*

About Schmidt. A retiree journeys to his estranged daughter's wedding and learns more about himself and life on the way. *Fullerton Public Library, Osborne Auditorium, 353 W. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 738-6327. Thurs., Aug. 16, 1 p.m. Free.*

Jezebel. The first film to play at the Lido Theater is back to help celebrate the historic Newport Beach movie house's 80th anniversary. The screening benefits Lupus International. *Regency Lido Theater, 3459 Via Lido, Newport Beach. https://bit.ly/2NSlewZ. Thurs., Aug. 16, 6 p.m. $20.*

Elvis '68 Comeback Special. It's a 50th-anniversary screening of the television special that had Elvis Presley performing before a live audience for the first time in years, relaunching his career. A making-of feature is included in the screening event. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Thurs., Aug. 16, 7:30 p.m., also Aug. 20. $15.*

Casablanca. To celebrate the history of movie making at Crystal Cove State Park, Crystal Cove Conservancy shows movies on the beach this summer, such as Michael Curtiz's 1942 masterpiece. American expatriate Rick Blaine (Humphrey Bogart) puts his past behind him by running a gin joint in Morocco during the beginning of World War II. Then his former lover Ilsa (Ingrid Bergman), who'd left him waiting for her at a Paris train station one day before war broke out, walks into his nightclub, and everything goes to *merde*. *Crystal Cove State Park, "Beaches" Film & Media Center (historic Cottage No. 13), 8471 N. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 497-7647. Thurs., Aug. 16, 8 p.m. Free.*

Miami Connection. The *Bombs Away* podcast, which originates from inside Frida's projection room, takes over the stage with a live recording of the film-skewering show and a screening of the 1987 B-movie. Martial-arts pop/synth band Dragon Sound goes up against motorcycle ninjas with a tight grip on Florida's drug trade in the action flick. Besides seeing it and hearing the podcast, you can pose onstage with a Dragon Sound cutout; compete in a costume contest; reach into a mailbox to hopefully "find your father"; and either purchase or try to win a commemorative T-shirt, collectible cup or other prizes. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., Aug. 16, 8 p.m. $15.*

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

A Play Within a Play

Long Beach Playhouse's *The Twentieth-Century Way* brings the city's rainbow history back home

BY JOEL BEERS

Long Beach—OC's poor red-headed stepchild to the east, a city with no identity or economic or cultural import—does have some merits. Yes, Iowa-by-the-Sea remains as electrifying as that long-scuttled nickname would suggest, but the so-called International City sure has a lot of ships that visit. And you can ride in a gondola next door in Naples. And it's right next to a real city: San Pedro.

Oh, and it is also America's 25th queerest city (according to a survey by *The Advocate* in 2017 of cities with more than 250,000 residents), with its own gay mayor, Robert Garcia, one of the liveliest gay-pride events in the country, and LGBTQ neighborhoods such as Alamitos Beach and parts of Bluff Park and Belmont Heights.

But it hasn't exactly been the smoothest of journeys. A 2013 Historical Society of Long Beach exhibit that traced the history of the gay community in the city from 1914 to 2012 reminded the rest of us that 10 months before the landmark Stonewall Inn riots in New York City in 1969, a Long Beach resident mounted a "nonviolent rebellion" against harassing cops at his local watering hole, the Patch, and made a strong case that the gay-rights movement was incubated in the city after World War II.

Tom Jacobson's play *The Twentieth-Century Way* puts that needle even further back: to 1914, when the Long Beach Police Department hired two actors to pose as vice cops in a citywide dragnet to arrest "social vagrants" (read: men who may or may not have been engaging in "homosexual acts") who were giving the city of god-fearing church folk a bad name. Basically, the actors attempted to lure gay men into showing them their private parts, at which point they were arrested. It was entrapment, plain and simple, and some 33 men were rounded up, with most run out of town and their social standing destroyed. (Flashforward to 2016, when, as the digital magazine *Q Voice News* elaborated last month, a Long Beach Superior Court judge shamed the city's police department for targeting gay men in lewd-conduct sting operations.)

Jacobson's 2010 play, which played Off-Broadway in 2015, makes its Long Beach premiere at the city's oldest producing entity, the Long Beach Playhouse. But while this is a story steeped in history, and while Jacobson includes scoop-chasing journalists, sanctimonious townsfolk, less than morally upstanding cops and so-called "vagrants," many of whom were far more respectable and law-abiding than their fellow citizens, this is anything but a straight-up history play. It's a play within a play—hell, it's a lot of plays within a lot of plays—as it all takes place in an unnamed theater in 1914 and features two actors playing all the roles. Those two actors, both of whom pull off the Herculean feat of switching between a myriad of characters, often during the same line, are Noah Wagner and Christian Jordan Skinner. Wagner plays Warren, an older, mysterious actor who still traffics in the older representational style of acting (basically pretending), while Skinner portrays Brown, a younger devotee of an inward-based acting style (think the method). Both have shown up for an audition to an unnamed play for the same role. Warren, who constantly seems to be working an angle, convinces Brown they are going to test their skills through improvising; the actor who convincingly outperforms the other can stick around and get the part.

While Jacobson introduces these twin conceits early—the clash between acting styles, an improvisational battle—neither is strongly supported during the course of the approximately two-hour play. The beginning, as well as the strange ending, which seems to suggest a more modern sense of self-loathing, self-denying closeted men, seem shoehorned in. While the structure is ambitious, its start and finish are not adequately fleshed out and don't comfortably rest with everything in between. That's a shame because what happens in between, from the shameless hustling of the two actors, who are really nothing more than bounty hunters, to the toll this sting takes on consenting adults, many of whom are entrapped in their own homes, to the disgusting hypocrisy of people attempting to build a so-called morally upstanding community by championing such an ugly, immoral campaign, is gripping, poignant and anger-inducing. In the hands of director Reed Flores, both Wagner and Skinner deliver exceptional performances. Yes, with so many characters popping in and out, it's difficult at times to keep track of just what is going on, but it's undeniable that something Big is happening here.

It may not be a perfect play, but it's a perfect reminder that one of the highest callings a playwright can aspire to is less reminding us of history, warts and all, but re-imagining it and, by doing so, convincingly illustrating Faulkner's line that the past is never dead—it's not even past.

COURTESY OF LONG BEACH PLAYHOUSE STUDIO THEATRE

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY WAY **at Long Beach Playhouse Studio Theatre, 5021 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 494-1014, www.lbplayhouse.org. Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m., Sun., 2 p.m. Through Aug. 19. $24**

ARTSOVERLOAD

» AIMEE MURILLO

Aug. 10-16

"THE ART OF DR. SEUSS COLLECTION": There are many new additions to this collection of never-before-seen and rare images, now celebrating its 20th year. Opening reception, Thurs., Aug. 16, 5-9 p.m. Open Mon.-Thurs., 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sun., 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Through Sept. 8. Free. Narrative Gallery, 417 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 715-3082; www.narrative-gallery.com.

"THE ART OF LIJAYU AND KAM REDLAWSK": Brought to you by Photonic Playground, this dual exhibition showcases the work of environmental concept artist Yn and industrial designer Redlawsk. Open Mon.-Fri., 4-9 p.m., Sat.-Sun., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Through Oct. 6. Free. LGBT Center on 4th, 205 E. Fourth St., Ste. 200, Santa Ana, (714) 953-5428; www.lgbtcenterinc.org/centeren4.

DARK ART EMPORIUM 2-YEAR ANNIVERSARY SHOW: The gallery with the most morbid, gleefully creepy tastes celebrates with an open-themed art show. Opening reception, Sat., 7-10 p.m. Open Tues.-Sat., noon-7 p.m., Sun., noon-5 p.m. Through Sept. 30. Dark Art Emporium, 256 Elm Ave., Long Beach, (562) 612-1118; www.darkartemporium.com.

***ISADORA*:** World-premiere of a ballet based on the life of modern dance choreographer Isadora Duncan, starring prima ballerina Natalia Osipova. Fri., 7:30 p.m., Sat., 2 & 7:30 p.m., Sun., 1 p.m. $59-$169. Segerstrom Hall, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-2787, www.scfta.org.

MODERN BRUSH LETTERING: The introductory course demonstrates proper techniques for brush lettering and calligraphy. Sat., 10 a.m.-1 p.m. $120 (includes materials). M. Lovewell, 304 E. Fourth St., Ste. 103, Santa Ana, (657) 245-3553, www.mlovewell.com.

"POP LIFE: REALISM VS. THE SURREALISM OF LIFE": Trina Love paints iconic figures of pop culture. Opening reception (includes live art, music, candy bar and pool installation replete with bunch balls). Sat., 7-10 p.m. Open Thurs.-Wed., 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Wed.-Sat., 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sun., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Through Sept. 9. Free. Made By Millworks, 240 Pine Ave., Long Beach, (562) 594-5233, madebymillworks.com.

"SANTA ANA HISTORY: A REFLECTION ON 150 YEARS": Manual "Manny" Escamilla shares a presentation on his diligent efforts to archive and preserve the city's history. Fri., 6-8 p.m. Free. Maker Center for the Arts, 811 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 485-1190, www.makeracenterarts.org.

***SEUSSICAL THE MUSICAL*:** Characters from classic Dr. Seuss books come alive in this musical hosted by Cat in the Hat and Horton the Elephant. Fri., 7 p.m., Sat.-Sun., 1 & 5 p.m. Through Aug. 19. $18-$22. Julianna Argyros Stage, South Coast Repertory, 655 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-5555; www.scr.org.

OCWEEKLY Bulletin

Feature your photo here!
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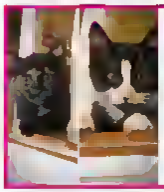
Upcoming Events

Music Tastes Good 2D18
Our mammoth two-day music, food, and arts festival returns to Marina Green Park, along the picturesque Downtown Long Beach shoreline, on September 29 and 30th, and will be headlined by none other than iconic British New Wave legends New Order (Saturday) making their only west coast appearance this year, and Grammy-nominated and Mercury Prize-winning English singer-songwriter James Blake (Sunday). Tickets at Eventbrite

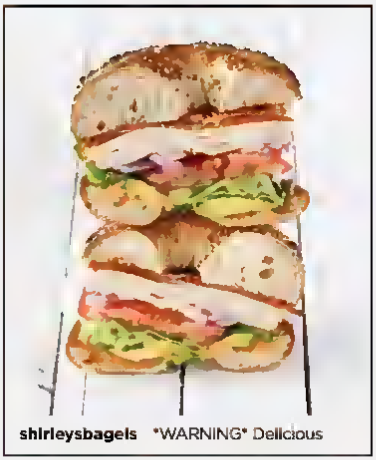
2018 CHOC Walk in the Park at Disneyland Sunday, August 26th
The CHOC Walk is a time when families express their thanks to the doctors and nurses that cared for their children, and share their memories with other families. It is a fundraiser that provides for the care, services, education and research at CHOC Children's Hospital. Visit CHOCWalk.org for more info.

Messages



Need your help to find Bowie & Bella a forever home!!! They are 10 weeks old siblings that have been fostered along with their mom since they were a week old. They are a loving, playful and healthy pair. They have been vaccinated, wormed, fixed and microchipped. Now all they need is a loving family of their own. Please contact Lorraine at Long Beach Spay and Neuter Foundation if interested in meeting these lovely kittens. (562)544-0335 or lbsn2006@yahoo.com

Featured This Week



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COURTESY OF FLASHBACK HEART ATTACK

The Evolution of the Harp Inn

How an OC institution became a cover- and tribute-band mecca

BY CHRISTINE TERRISSE

Inside a dimly lit bar in Costa Mesa, the late-night crowd gathered on the dance floor is small but mighty—and a little drunk. But to the sunglasses-sporting man presently standing on top of a cocktail table, his long, wavy hair flowing over the top of his bandana, it might as well be a packed arena in Poughkeepsie.

We are at the Harp Inn, an Irish pub that marked its 30th anniversary in March. The "(mis)leader" of the Barstow Boyz, Rim Morrison, is table-surfing while dressed in layers of '80s-fashion faux pas. Backed by the "ultimate '70s and '80s cover band"—at least according to their website—the ringleader conducts the final chorus of Queen's "Somebody to Love." The rest of the night, he and band mates Mixl, Nils and Roger play everything from Judas Priest to Billy Idol to Pink Floyd to Journey and Tom Petty. Their outfits may verge on ridiculous, but they deliver solid tunes.

But it wasn't always this way at the Harp. Before John Joe Lyons took over the pub, most of the bands were not as in your face. "There were a lot of Irish bands at that time, which worked pretty well, you know … in the '80s," he says. "Everything Irish seemed to be great for a while, musically. U2 were doing great; you had the Pogues, the Waterboys."

When the then-21-year-old came to the U.S. after Ireland's economy ran flat in the '80s, Lyons found a home away from home in the Harp. Shortly after taking over in 2002 for fellow Irishman Gerry Mackey, he removed the elevated dining area to make more room for a stage. (Not long ago, he upgraded the sound system with QSC Speakers and an Allen & Heath mixer board.) The Harp has become a staple for live music, with a recent shift toward booking what one could call "elevated or theatrical" bands, wherein the group take the business of being in a cover band more seriously than they take themselves, going balls to the wall on costuming and posturing.

In addition to such comedic cover bands (including the Clinton Affair, who are dedicated to the hits and misses of the '90s), Lyons has hand-selected a few tribute groups, each bringing a different approach to the music of artists such as the Grateful Dead (Cubensis), Smashing Pumpkins (The Great Pumpkin) and Nirvana (Nirvanish).

Cover and tribute bands have been around since nearly the beginning of rock as dreamers cut their teeth on the hits of emergent stars. The great, late Otis Redding found his early footing covering Little Richard, and one would be hard-pressed to imagine the Rolling Stones becoming the Rolling Stones without their devotion to blues artists such as Chuck Berry.

So if covering other artists is nothing new, why the seeming resurgence? In a 2017 *LA Weekly* article, Andy Hermann outlined the rise of the tribute band from the sidelines to a viable working business model. In that piece, he talked about the influence of Steel Panther, the wildly successful glam-metal outfit who now only play originals within their genre, coming full-circle.

Among those inspired by Steel Panther are Flashback Heart Attack, a synth-heavy cover band who've performed nearly every other Friday at the Harp Inn for the past eight years. In fact, according to lead singer and guitarist "Don Bronze," Flashback Heart Attack used to open for Steel Panther at the Key Club in LA. And one day, "I was like, 'Hey, I have this great idea. With red-leather suits, we're going to do this whole schtick of the Romantics and some of those '80s bands and play all the '80s new-wave stuff,'" the blond-wig-bedecked Bronze recalls.

"He used to come here and bug me every night to play," Lyons interjects.

The Harp has become the home base for the OC locals, who play up to 100 shows per year, from corporate gigs to weddings to charity events, and have acted as a backing band for Alice Cooper, Billie Joe Armstrong and Eddie Vedder. They've been profiled in numerous publications and accepted accolades including being named Best Live Band or Best Rock Band nine times in this very publication's Best Of issues. "[Steel Panther] showed me the format, kind of a blueprint of what you need to do … to be successful," says Bronze, who runs the operation full-time while the other two members hold down more traditional jobs.

Lyons chooses bands based on their ability to connect with and entertain customers while he provides comfort and reliability via the smooth Guinness he serves. He sees the Harp as a gathering place for his community and has held numerous charity fundraisers, a quality highlighted by 74th District Assemblyman Matthew Harper in June when the Harp was named Small Business of the Year in a Sacramento ceremony.

What happens when it's time for Lyons to exit stage left? "Oh, if I ever leave it, I would want to pass it to somebody who would do exactly what I'm doing," he says in a relaxed brogue. "It's been a landmark, an institution in this town, and I would want it to continue—I would want a little bit of a legacy."

THE HARP INN
130 E. 17th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 646-8855, www.harpinn.com

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The Trombone Brewer

Reel Big Fish Dan Regan makes waves in the craft-beer world

BY CJ SIMONSON

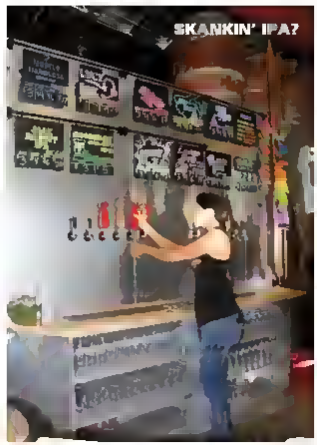
Orange County ska legends Reel Big Fish have been taking the stage and joyously tearing through their drinking anthem "Beer" for more than two decades. And for 19 years, trombonist Dan Regan was right there to hear the drunken crowds scream to the heavens, "I think I'll have myself a beer."

Of course, when front man Aaron Barrett wrote "Beer" in 1995, times were simpler—*beer* meant Budweiser, PBR and other mass-produced lagers. They weren't necessarily chosen for taste, but rather as a means to an end. Regan's tenure in the band, which ended in 2013, ran seemingly parallel to the meteoric rise of craft and independent beer, one that has now culminated in a brewery of his own and, in many ways, a shift in the meaning of their iconic hit.

"We were just dirty kids—I was 18 when we got signed," Regan insists, looking at a binder of band memorabilia his mom had collected over the years. We're in the backroom of Liberation Brewing Co. in Long Beach, which opened in early May—a far cry from his humbling introduction to beer in the suburbs of SoCal. "We'd play a house party, and I'd be talking to girls with a beer in my hand, and Brad [Nowell] from Sublime would walk by and go, 'You've had that same beer in your hand for an hour! You're not leaving until you've had six more!'"

Around 1993, a friend jumped on the trend of brewing his own beer, and those homebrewed pale ales, coupled with the mainstream rise of breweries such as Sierra Nevada and Anderson Valley, changed not only Regan's beer palate, but also his young life on the road. "The tour manager would come in in the morning and say, 'Okay, we get three cases of beer; what do you want?' And the drummer would say, 'Natty Ice!' … We'd still have two more, so I'd say, 'Sierra Nevada.' And then, eventually, I would start saying to get whatever was local."

Thus his years-long education in beer started. During the early days of Twitter in 2011, when saxophonist and fellow beer enthusiast Matt Appleton joined the band and became Regan's de facto on-the-road roommate, the two would post the city they were stopped in and ask for beer recommendations before exploring exciting up-and-coming breweries. "The bartenders would be like, 'You don't sound like you're from around here,' and we'd say we were in a band. Then suddenly, we'd get a tour and meet the brewers," Regan recalls. "Eventually, it became that we'd hit up the brewery, have a couple of beers, go do soundcheck, hit up another brewery, do the show … That was our routine for years. And they're still doing it!"



TAPLEY EATON

The move from becoming a beer drinker to an active participant in the Long Beach craft-brew scene wasn't easy. According to Regan, his failed attempts at homebrewing in the late 2000s led to his Liberation Brewing partner Eric McLaughlin attempting the craft himself. And while McLaughlin would go on to brew at Ohana Brewing in LA, Regan was spending his time on tour busses talking about how one day he'd open up a brewery of his own. "I talked their ears off about it for years," he recalls.

When I ask if any of the guys from the band have had a chance to stop by yet, he pauses. "The bass player [Derek Gibbs] was in here during one of our soft opens, but they haven't come in all together," he says. Then Regan's excitable disposition shifts for a moment. "I think when Matt came in was the first time I cried. It was three years of tearing our hair out, going gray, trying to get this place open … So to look up and see him, after talking about it with all of them for so long, it was a good moment."

And then, just like the song, they had a beer.

LIBERATION BREWING CO
3630 Atlantic Ave., Long Beach, (562) 349-0133, www.liberationbrewing.com

DJOSEFIN MAURER

Friday

THE HIGGS, WTFB: 8 p.m., $10, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039, www.wayfarerem.com

LIL BABY: 11:15 p.m., $25, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com

MATTHEW LOGAN VASQUEZ, OUSTIN LOVELIS, RESTAVRANT: 8 p.m., $11, $13, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

NEKROMANTIX, THE BLACK ROSE PHANTOMS, THE THIRSTY CROWS: 9 p.m., $20, 21+. Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Tustin, (714) 544-1995, www.martysonnewport.com

PIXIES, WETWOOO SMOKES: 7 p.m., $53.50, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

Saturday

CLAIBO: 9 p.m., $22.50, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com

THE GET LOW: 8 p.m., free, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

THE LATE ONES: 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Slidebar Rock N-Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 871-7469, www.slidebarfullerton.com

NEKROMANTIX, THE QUARANTEOS, THE AUTOPSIES: 9 p.m., $20, 21+. Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Tustin, (714) 544-1995, www.martysonnewport.com

OTEP: 7 p.m., $20, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

THE PUSCIE JONES REVUE: 8 p.m., $7, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039, www.wayfarerem.com.

Sunday

HE IS WE: 7 p.m., $12, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim

OMEGA TRIBE, LIFE ONCE FLOURISHED HERE, APOCALYPSE, HEADDRESS: 8 p.m., $10-$12, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292, www.alexsbar.com

REX ORANGE COUNTY, VEGYN: 8 p.m., $20, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com

TRAPPED UNDER ICE, FIREWALKER, ODD MAN OUT, LOWER SPECIES, WARFARE, ROLEX: 7 p.m., $20, all ages. The Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com.

Monday

AUNTIE CHRIST, featuring Exene Cervenka, Mark Freeman and DJ Bonnbrakn, 8 p.m., $10, 21+. Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Tustin, (714) 544-1995, www.martysonnewport.com.

TAKERS LEAVERS, WARREN BETTY, GRAVLER: 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039, www.wayfarerem.com.

Tuesday

THE CHAVEZ RAVINE: 9 p.m., $5, 21+. Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Tustin, (714) 544-1995, www.martysonnewport.com.

STONE SENATE, POORMAN'S CHANGE, ROBERT JON AND THE WRECK: 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Slidebar Rock N-Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 871-7469, www.slidebarfullerton.com

Wednesday

EVIL DEAD; LA THRASH LEGENDS: 9 p.m., free, 21+. The Slidebar Rock N-Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 871-7469, www.slidebarfullerton.com.

PATO BANTON: 9 p.m., $10, 21+. Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Tustin, (714) 544-1995, www.martysonnewport.com.

Thursday, Aug. 16

THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE, SWIMM, BLANCO NINO: 8 p.m., $5, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039, www.wayfarerem.com.

JOE RAY: 9 p.m., $20, 21+. Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Tustin, (714) 544-1995, www.martysonnewport.com.

SKIMASK THE SLUMP GOD, BANOHUNTA IZZY, OANNY TOWERS, DJ SCHEME, ILLXCHRIS: 8 p.m., $20-$125, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com

SUMMER SALT, HOT FLESH HEATWAVE, THE SYMPOSIUM: 8 p.m., $15, all ages. The Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com.

VAGUESS, NIGHTMARE ENTERPRISES, FREAKEES, TELESTAR: 8 p.m., $5, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292, www.alexsbar.com

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Après Pill, *Le Déluge*

I'm a 27-year-old woman living on the East Coast. I've been sexually active and on birth control since I was 16—almost always on the pill. I recently switched to the NuvaRing, which I had a bad reaction to. I had no libido at all and extreme mood swings/bouts of depression I could not live with. My boyfriend and I decided it would be a good idea to go off hormonal birth control for a while, just to see what would happen. We've been together for almost four years, so we agreed condoms would be fine, and I would try the route of no more supplemental hormones. I stopped a couple of months ago, and it's been a mix of good and bad. The good is that my moods are more even. Another good thing is I feel like I'm having a sexual awakening. My libido came back! But the bad thing is ... my libido came back in a way I wasn't expecting. My sexual appetite is insane. I want to have sex with everyone: men, women, friends, colleagues, acquaintances! My boyfriend has been amazing through all of this. He's agreed to be us open up our relationship under specific terms. I agree with the terms we placed, but I still feel like my urges are going to get me in trouble. I know to not have sex with friends and colleagues, but a lot of situations come up that make it hard to resist—especially when alcohol is involved. I'm very good with self-policing, and I don't think I'll actually act on my urges. My question is one you get a lot: Is this normal? Can removing a cocktail of hormones from my life really change me this much? I used to want sex, but now I WANT SEX. I want a lot of it, and it's overwhelming. I don't want to blame it all on the birth control, but I can't help but feel that's true since it was the only variable in my life that changed in the past couple of months. I want to be faithful to my boyfriend, who has been great and understanding—allowing us to open our relationship to casual encounters with strangers. (Also: no friends, no one we both know. DADT and no intimacy with anyone—it must be purely sexual/physical.) But I'm feeling sexual connections to so many more people now, often to people I've known for a while. I see this all as mostly positive, but the adjustment to the new sexual hunger has been strange and difficult to wrap my head around.

Suddenly Horny And Going Gaga Isn't Normal

"I'm so glad to hear this woman sees the increase in her libido as positive," said Dr. Meredith Chivers, an associate professor of psychology at Queen's University, a world-renowned sex researcher and—I'm proud to say—a frequent guest expert around here. "At the same time, I understand how overwhelming these urges can feel, especially when they are new."

Luckily for you, SHAGGIN, you're with someone who's secure enough to let you feel the fuck out of these new feelings. Whether or not you act on them is one thing—DADT agreement or no DADT agreement—but not having to pretend you aren't suddenly interested in fucking men, women, friends, colleagues and acquaintances is a real gift.

Another example of your good luck? Dr. Chivers is about to give you the actual science download on hormonal birth control—complete with qualifications about what we know, what we don't know and areas that require more research!

"It's difficult to say what is and isn't normal when it comes to the effects of hormonal contraception (HC) on women's sexual interest," said Dr. Chivers. "To my knowledge, research exists has not specifically examined the question of what happens to women's sex drive after stopping HC."

But lots of women have stopped using hormonal contraception for the same reason you did, SHAGGIN—women about how it might be affecting their libido—and there is some indirect evidence that HC can negatively impact a woman's desire for sex.

"The NuvaRing is a combined hormonal contraceptive containing synthetic estrogens and progestens (the same as many birth control pills)," said Dr. Chivers. "HC like the NuvaRing works, in part, by mixing and stabilizing progesterone levels throughout the menstrual cycle, which helps to prevent ovulation and implantation."

And it's those stabilized progesterone levels that could be the culprit.

"Progesterone is one of the hormones involved in the menstrual cycle and pregnancy; levels are highest in the week before menstruation (called the luteal phase) and are also high during pregnancy," said Dr. Chivers. "A recent, large-scale study reported that women with higher progesterone—women who weren't using HC—had lower sexual interest, on average. Because using HC is associated with reductions in sexual interest, we could predict that stopping HC, and thus progesterone levels returning to more typical lower levels, could be associated with increases in sexual motivation."

Since you definitely experienced an increase in sexual desire after you removed your NuvaRing and started using condoms, SHAGGIN, Dr. Chivers was comfortable saying ... that you *definitely* experienced an increase in sexual desire and that *might* be related to going off HC.

"Given that she has been using some form of HC since she became sexually active, my guess is that she's never had the chance to experience her sexuality while naturally cycling," said Dr. Chivers. "Part of her process could be learning about her unmedicated hormonal cycle, her sexuality and the variations in her sex drive. For example, does her sexual interest fluctuate over her cycle? She might want to consider collecting some data with a cycle tracker app. Flo, Clue and Period Tracker are among those that my women sex-researcher/educator colleagues recommend. This might help her notice patterns in her libido, attractions and sexual pleasure—and help her to develop strategies to manage, and perhaps even capitalize on, her sexual desires."

As for your boyfriend, SHAGGIN, and your desire to be faithful to him: So long as you honor the terms of your openness agreement, you *are* being faithful to him. But check in with him more than once before you fuck someone who isn't him. Because when a partner agrees to open the relationship but then places a long list of restrictions on who you can fuck—a list that excludes most of the people you wanna fuck—that can be a sign your partner doesn't actually want to open the relationship.

The last word goes to Dr. Chivers: Whether you're having fun with others or you decide to remain sexually exclusive with your boyfriend. "Have fun!"

To learn more about Dr. Chivers' research, visit the SageLab website (queensu.ca/psychology/sexuality-and gender-lab) and follow her on Twitter @DrMLChivers.

I'm part of a nonhierarchical polycule. In a few months, one of my girlfriends will be marrying her fiancee. I'll be attending as a guest with my other girlfriend. What are the guidelines or expectations for purchasing a gift for your girlfriend's wedding? Surprisingly, the other advice columnists don't have guidance on this one.

Wedding Etiquette Dilemma

Get the couple something nice, something you can afford, maybe something from their gift registry. Or give them a card with a check in it so they can spend the money on whatever they might need for their household or use it to cover the expense of the wedding itself. In short, WED wedding-gift guidelines are the same for people in nonhierarchical polycules as they are for love-muggle monocules. I'm not slamming the poly thing for overprocessing and overthinking—most people's process (a.k.a. communicate) too little, and it's often better to overthink than to underthink or not-think—but not everything needs to be dumped into the poly processor and puréed. Congrats to your girlfriend (the one who's getting married) and her fiancée!

On the Lovecast *(savagelovecast.com), the kink phenomenon of "sub drop." Contact Dan via email@savagelove.net, follow him on Twitter @fakedansavage, and visit ITMFA.org*

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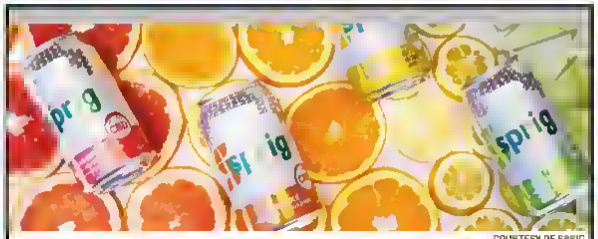

COURTESY OF SPRIG

TOKE OF THE WEEK
» MARY CARREON

Sprig CBD Soda

Soda's a tricky thing. Most of the time, it's loaded with sugar, coloring and god knows what else. I mean, why does Dr Pepper have 23 flavors in it? Does it really need that many? Seems a little gross.

Sprig (*drinksprig.com*), a cannabis-infused soda brand, is reinventing how to use medicated drinks. Here at *OC Weekly*, we've tried lemonades, juices, aguas frescas and coconut waters—you name it, we probably loved it. Although they all taste great, the one thing that stops me from buying flats of these delicious beverages is I'm sensitive to sugar.

But Sprig's new 5-calorie CBD soda contains no sugar or artificial sweeteners. Most "diet" or "zero calorie" sodas are loaded with artificial sweeteners that are beyond horrid for one's health. These sodas are significantly less bad—and they make for excellent summertime cocktail mixers.

Last weekend, I shook up a tequila drink with lime, sliced-up cucumbers and St. Germain. I topped it with some Sprig Zero Calorie Citrus CBD soda, which took the concoction from a level seven to a 10. The mixture of CBD and effervescence made me feel as if I were a fairy princess fluttering above tropical isles. I don't drink soda often, but I like feeling like a fairy. So I'll definitely be keeping Sprig on hand.

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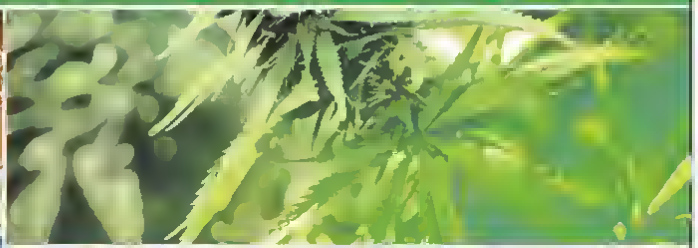
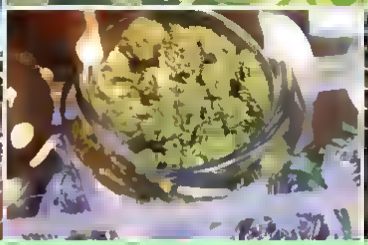

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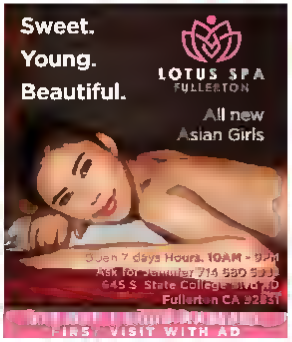
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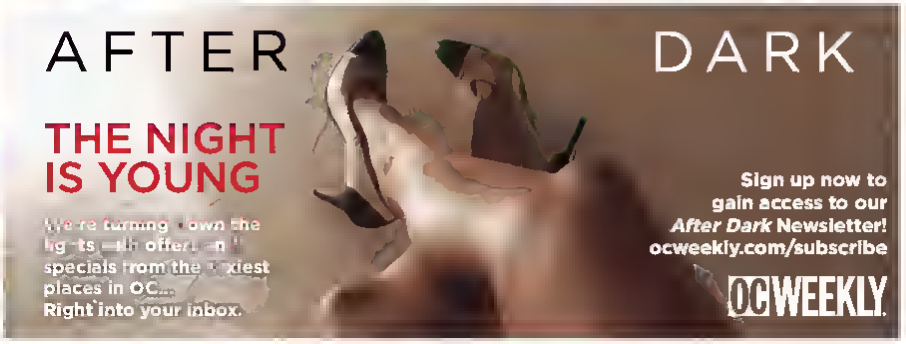
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The Real Big Sur

Soak up the magic of 'The Art of Baja California' at Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Gardens

BY LISA BLACK

The works of three extraordinary living Baja California artists fit perfectly into Casa Romantica's slender gallery. The two distinct painters—landscape master Juan Angel Castillo and folk-surrealist Esau Andrade Valencia—each take half the room, while the small-scale, erotically charged sculptures of Benito Ortega Vargas run right down the middle. The Todos Santos-based sculptor's bronze or wood constructions sit on or are suspended above pedestals, the better to circle them more than once, taking in each exquisite detail while deciphering how one figurative element morphs into the next.

As intriguing as they are, I was drawn first to Valencia's highly saturated colors, just as a child would be to a carnival. The Tijuana-based painter zooms in so closely on his subjects that even from a distance, they appear to meet you halfway. But stand nearby, and the layered landscapes in the background stack up from earth to foliage to village to treetops to hills—all the way to the night sky of stars and moon.

La Vaca features two quarter-moons. One glows in the sky, while the other has a painted face resembling the classic *lotería* version. It's the latter that's cradled by a woman sitting atop the title cow, whose heavy-lidded eyes twinkle with white light. The woman's hair is pulled back into a red bow, its loops appearing as if they were two water jugs hanging from her head. She wears a soft blue belt but is entangled in a green rope or snake whose end is torn. Was it the cow's tether, now lazily binding the woman? The bovine, with a touch of that ropey green shadowing its lids and alarmingly red udders, seems to know the sad answer.

While the cow in no way suggests it's about to jump over the moon, I am reminded how a child's play brings unrelated things together into new worlds. Valencia taps into that creative ease magnificently. In these nocturnal exteriors, subjects' eyes either meet a viewer's gaze or avoid it, no matter where you stand. A monkey sits on one side of a barbell in *Strongman* and stares nowhere, as if commenting on the idiocy of its task. What could its gravitational pull possibly matter?

In the oil-on-canvas *Catrina Cantante*, Catrina stands on trampled streamers and flags long after the fair has shut down for the night, when the wisecracks of the lottery caller and the squeals of children have ceased to be heard. Her gesture includes the moon, for she performs her song only for herself and the orb.

POETS TO THE EARTH
BY BENITO ORTEGA VARGAS

COURTESY CASA ROMANTICA CULTURAL CENTER AND GARDENS

My favorite night scene is moonless *Lluvia* is rain personified, flying through the storm in a dress much like the clouds from which water pours. Her belt shoots lightning to the ground, and she blows a horn that blares water. The background-to-foreground relationship here differs from the others, as it merges with the drenching rain.

Hanging beside *El Sol*, *La Lana* is given a full-moon face with a touch of blue eye shadow and fuchsia lips, her plump chin refusing to be squished flat. That lunar portrait is nothing like its version in Valencia's *Lotería*, a grid of 25 small paintings that sometimes diverge from the classic deck of 54. Here, Valencia lets his precise technique go. The edges are blurrier. The fields on which *El dado*, *La paleta*, et al. float appear one color until scrutiny reveals a miasma of unused puddles from the artist's palette. The top-left painting brings a bit of self-reflective humor with *El pincel*, the artist's brush.

"Mexican bingo" actually originated in Italy sometime in the 1500s. The game of chance arrived in Mexico in the 18th century, and the deck we see most often today was produced by a Frenchman beginning in 1887.

Valencia's colors are as bold as those old *lotería* cards, though he uses very little paint to complex effect. Yes, his work is firmly within the realm of folk art and magic realism, but it triggers an intense subjective response that has staying power through the rest of the exhibit and beyond.

Self-taught since the age of 6, when his family moved to Baja, Castillo has been capturing the peninsula's rugged coast for 40 years in works collected by museums and such celebrities as Russell Crowe, Ringo Starr and Frank Sinatra. The plein-air painter's mural at the Tijuana Cultural Center, *Tierra Prometida*, offers Baja's coastline from Rosarito to Point Loma.

His uninhabited vistas on display in San Clemente contain a single moment during the golden hour, representing the violent movement of water as it meets the instability of impenetrable rock. His use of color pushes the boundaries of even the most astounding sunsets. How long and difficult was the hike Castillo took to reach this vantage point? How many times did he watch sea, sky and land from the very spot he offers up to a viewer's gaze? How many more decades will this wild stretch remain so? Perhaps until it shows up as a selling point in a house-hunting reality show called something like *Baja Bound*.

Making a line through the painters' carnivals and far-reaching coasts are Vargas' sculptures surprising, mysterious and playful all at once. The fact they are made of such lasting material only adds to their power to astonish. Exchanges between creatures that unexpectedly cross into each other's worlds evoke earth and sea. In *Eternal Lovers*, the faces of the flying bodies are coming together for a kiss at much too high a velocity, as if reuniting after eons apart. *Alfonsina and the Sea* is a leisurely float on erotic waters.

Born in Mexico City and classically trained, Vargas has been a promoter of artistic endeavors throughout his career, co-founding the Taller de Grafica Libre de Oaxaca for printmaking and the Institute of Visual Arts there. He now lives in Todos Santos, which the Mexican government has officially declared a Pueblo Mágico.

Don't miss these glimpses into Baja's artistic tradition, which dates back millennia to the cave paintings of Sierra de San Francisco.

"THE ART OF BAJA CALIFORNIA"
at Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Gardens, 415 Avenida Granada, San Clemente, (949) 498 2139, www.casaromantica.org. Open Tues.-Thurs., 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Fri.-Sun., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Through Aug. 25. Free with admission ($5).

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